REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 24, 2003. Claims 1-11, 18, 19, 21, 22, and 42-47 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 8, 18, 19, 21, 22, 42, and 45 are in independent form. Claims 42 and 44 have been amended to define what Applicants regard as their invention more clearly. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Three sheets of corrected formal drawings have been submitted herewith, in which the drawing changes submitted on January 17, 2003, and approved in the outstanding Office Action.

Applicants note that they filed a further Information Disclosure Statement on October 23, 2003, and presume that an initialed copy of the form PTO-1449 that accompanied that paper will be return to their attorneys with the examine's next Action.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that Claims 1-11, 18, 19, 21, and 22. Only Claims 42-47 remain unallowed.

Claims 42-47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,336,152 B1 (Richman et al.).

Independent Claim 42 is directed to an information processing apparatus that comprises a memory, configured to store information about a device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus but is not mounted on said information processing apparatus, and a communication unit, configured to send the stored information to an external device.

In the aspect of the present invention recited in Claim 42, which is an information processing apparatus, that apparatus sends information about a device that is mountable on that information processing apparatus but is not mounted on that information

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processing apparatus. By virtue of this feature, an external device can recognize such device that is mountable on the information processing apparatus before the device is actually mounted.

Richman relates to a method of automatically configuring devices, in which device information is collected for each of plural devices connected to computer system buses, and is stored in a computer memory. The device information stored in this fashion, however, appears merely to indicate the *present* configuration (i.e., devices which are currently mounted on the computer system buses): see, for example, col. 4, lines 33-37: "... a particular device is detected *on the system bus* of interest and thereafter assigned a device identification code that identifies the particular device as *being connected* to the selected system bus [emphases added]". The flow charts of Figs. 10 and 11 also suggest that only devices currently on the system are of concern in *Richman*, especially since removal of a device results in that device no longer being accessed, the freeing of resources that have been allocated to that device, and the unloading of the device driver for that device (see steps 270 - 76 in Fig. 11A). Certainly, Applicants submit that nothing has been found or pointed out in that patent that would affirmatively suggest that such information is somehow collected about a device that *can be* mounted, but *at present is not* mounted, on the apparatus, as recited in Claim 42. Applicants respectfully point out that even if what is disclosed in *Richman* were assumed, for argument's sake, to be physically able to collect such information about a device that is not mounted at present, that patent still could not properly be relied upon to negate the patentability of Claim 42, unless the patent contained a positive and clear teaching or suggestion of that feature. In the absence of any such clear teaching or suggestion, Claim 42 must be deemed to be allowable over that patent.

The *Richman* method also includes obtaining logical configuration data indicating configuration requirements for operating the device. This latter information, however,

merely indicates the necessary configuration, and is not itself indicative of whether the device is currently mounted. The logical configuration data, like the device information, does not relate to any device that is mountable but that is not in fact currently mounted.

Since, as far as Applicants can see, *Richman* fails to teach or suggest collecting or using information about a device that is mountable on an information processing apparatus but is not actually mounted at the time of collection or use of such information, Claim 42 is believed to be clearly allowable over that patent.

Independent Claim 45 a method claim corresponding to apparatus Claim 42, and is deemed allowable over *Richman* for the same reasons as is Claim 42.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as a reference against independent Claims 42 and 45. Those claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or the other of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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